

Residential Exemption

Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014)

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor • Ronald W. Rakow, Commissioner of Assessing



Filing Deadline: MARCH 31, 2014

Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center (TRAC)

TRAC is a one-stop taxpayer assistance center for questions about the following:

- Personal exemption
- Residential exemption
- Current real estate tax
- Current personal property tax
- Current motor vehicle excise
- Ward and parcel number
- Changes of ownership
- Duplicate tax bills
- Property tax abatements
- Current year tax bill payments
- Motor Vehicle Excise
- Boat Excise

Call: (617) 635-4287

Visit: Boston City Hall, mezzanine level. Office hours are weekdays from 9AM - 5 PM.

Log-On:
www.cityofboston.gov/assessing

What is the Residential Exemption?

The City of Boston offers a residential exemption to homeowners who occupy their property as the principal residence. To be eligible, the owner must have occupied their property as the principal residence on January 1, 2013. The residential exemption, which reduces the tax bill by exempting a portion of the value from taxation, saved homeowners \$1,724.47 in Fiscal Year 2013.

Who can Apply?

Every taxpayer in the City of Boston who owns residential property and occupies the property as their principal residence on January 1, 2013 may be eligible for the residential exemption in Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014). An individual may qualify for a residential exemption on only one parcel.

For the purpose of this exemption, the principal residence is the address from which your Massachusetts income tax return is filed. Your Social Security Number is required to verify eligibility. This information is kept confidential and used solely to confirm a 2012 personal income tax filing from your address with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The social security number you supply is submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Revenue for verification.

When must an application be filed?

The residential exemption for Fiscal Year 2014 is applied to the 3rd quarter tax bill. If a credit does not appear on your Fiscal Year 2014 3rd quarter tax bill, you may file an application within three (3) months of the mailing date of the 3rd quarter tax bill. The final deadline for filing for Fiscal Year 2014 is March 31, 2014.

How Do I Apply?

Application forms are available at the Assessing Department, Room 301, City Hall OR at the Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center (TRAC), mezzanine level, City Hall. Application forms are also available online after the 3rd quarter tax bill is issued at www.cityofboston.gov/assessing. Follow the Instructions to the right of the Property Search Input screen.

Complete the application for residential exemption. Your Social Security Number is required for identification purposes and will be kept confidential. It will be used solely to confirm a 2012 personal income tax filing from this address with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Return the completed application to: Assessing Department, Room 301, One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201-1050.

May other exemptions apply?

The residential exemption is granted in addition to any other personal exemption to which a taxpayer may be entitled. However, no parcel of real estate may be assessed for less than ten percent of its fair cash value (there is also an exemption for certain persons with physical infirmities and financial hardship).

How is the value of the exemption calculated?

A residential exemption is the dollar value that is exempt from taxation. Qualified homeowners benefit by having a portion of their property value exempt from taxation. If, for example, the residential exemption value were \$100,000, a home with an assessed value of \$300,000 would be taxed on just \$200,000 of value. This exemption value, when multiplied by the current residential tax rate, represents the dollar savings amount of the exemption.

Compliance with Requirements

The Assessing Department conducts periodic reviews to ensure that only those owners who actually occupy their property as their principal residence receive the exemption. Owners who do not comply with the requirements of the residential exemption - or who fail to respond to requests for documentation - will lose the exemption benefit.

Residential Exemption Review

The Taxpayer Referral & Assistance Center (TRAC) has three (3) months from the date on which the application was filed to determine the merits of the application. Taxpayers should note that the filing of an application for the residential exemption does

not mean that you can postpone the payment of your tax. The tax appearing on each of the quarterly tax bills must be paid in full. If the application for residential exemption is subsequently approved, the Office of the Collector Treasurer will issue a credit later in the fiscal year.

Appeal of the Decision

If the application is denied, you may file an appeal with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Appellate Tax Board (ATB) within three (3) months of the date on which TRAC made its decision. The ATB is located at 100 Cambridge Street, 2nd floor, Suite 200, Boston, MA 02114. The ATB can be reached by phone at (617) 727-3100.